

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AEC-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-01 INR-05

INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 RSC-01 SAM-01

OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-01 NASA-01

EUR-12 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06 /095 W

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R 111140Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6773

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV, ENRG, MA

SUBJECT: MALAGASY GOVT CHARGES AGAINST OIL MARKETING COMPANIES

REFS: TANANARIVE 1676 AND 1665

1. MANAGERS OF CALTEX AND ESSO IN MADAGASCAR REPORT DEC 10
THERE HAS BEEN NO RPT NO CHANGE IN THEIR SITUATION SINCE
EMBASSY'S LAST REPORT ON GOMR INVESTIGATION INTO FOREIGN
EXCHANGE REPATRIATION PRACTICES OF LOCAL OIL MARKETING
COMPANIES. GOMR CONTINUES TO PREVENT MANAGERS FROM LEAVING
MADAGASCAR.

2. JULIAN DASHIELL, AMERICAN MANAGER OF CALTEX, REPORTS
GOMR COMPLETED REVIEW OF FILES OF SHELL OIL TWO WEEKS AGO,
AND SHELL MANAGERS DULY SIGNED "PROCES-VERBAUX" OF
INVESTIGATIONS. FOLLOWING SIGNATURE OF "PROCES-VERBAUX,"
SHELL MANAGERS EXPECTED TO BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE COUNTRY, AS
MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE RAMAROSON HAD INFERRED TO
AMB MENDENHALL OCT 28 WOULD BE THE CASE. MANAGERS WERE
TOLD, HOWEVER, THAT LIFTING OF RESTRICTION ON THEIR
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MOVEMENT COULD ONLY BE APPROVED BY MINISTER RAMAROSON,

WHO WAS "INDISPOSED" AND UNABLE TO SEE THEM. NONE OF FOREIGN OIL COMPANY OFFICIALS IN MADAGASCAR HAS BEEN ABLE TO TALK WITH MINISTER IN RECENT MONTHS.

3. DASHIELL ALSO REPORTED HE UNDERSTANDS FROM RELIABLE SOURCE (WIFE OF MIDDLE-LEVEL GOVT OFFICIAL WHO IS EMPLOYEE OF CALTEX) THAT RAMAROSON HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED FOR "NERVOUS EXHAUSTION." (ANOTHER EMBASSY SOURCE CONFIRMS WIDESPREAD REPORTS OF RAMAROSON ILLNESS OR "INDISPOSITION.") ACCORDINGLY OIL COMPANY MANAGERS DO NOT FORESEE EASING OF RESTRICTION ON THEIR MOVEMENT IN NEAR FUTURE.

4. CALTEX UNDERSTANDS GOMR REVIEW OF ITS (CALTEX) FILES NOW COMPLETED AND "PROCES-VERBAUX" WILL BE READY FOR SIGNATURE WITHIN FEW DAYS. DASHIELL WILL SIGN, BUT WILL ADD WRITTEN EXPRESSION OF RESERVATIONS BELOW SIGNATURE. "PROCES-VERBAUX" OF INVESTIGATIONS OF ESSO, TOTAL, AND AGIP WILL FOLLOW.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT SEVERAL LARGE FRENCH-OWNED IMPORT-EXPORT COMPANIES IN MADAGASCAR ARE ALSO UNDER GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION FOR VIOLATION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE REPATRIATION REGULATIONS, WITH MANAGERS RESTRICTED FROM LEAVING COUNTRY. MALAGASY INTERIOR MINISTER COL. RICHARD RATSIMANDRAVA RECENTLY PUBLICLY DENOUNCED "COMPAGNIE MARSEILLAISE" (MAJOR FRENCH TRADING COMPANY) FOR ALLEGED SWINDLE OF GOMR. ON DEC 6 HE TOLD GRADUATING CLASS OF LOCAL GENDARMERIE ACADEMY (IN REMARKS HEADLINED IN LOCAL PRESS), "WE MUST GUARD AGAINST ACTIVITIES OF LARGE FOREIGN COMPANIES WHICH SUCK NATIONAL RICHES." ALL OF THIS HAS NOT HELPED GENERAL ATMOSPHERE FOR FOREIGN FIRMS IN MADAGASCAR.
ELFERS

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Message Attributes

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